

RECORD OF DECISION

TITLE: Mobile Police Stations

Ref: PCC/D/2019/20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Effectively engaging with rural communities and maintaining a visible policing presence across a very large force area is challenging for policing teams.

Existing mobile police stations are in daily use around the force as a means of enabling better engagement with communities. However, more of these resources would enable further improvements in this area, particularly in reaching the most isolated communities, for example, along the Welsh border.

PROPOSAL

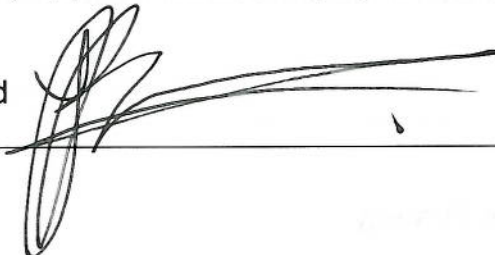
That the Police and Crime Commissioner authorise funding for the purchase of two vehicles, enabling West Mercia Police to more effectively engage with isolated communities.

The purchase and conversion cost of £50,000 is to be drawn down from reserves in 2019/20, with other associated costs (including livery) to be met from existing capital budgets within the police force.

**APPROVAL OF
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

I hereby approve the above proposal.

Signed



PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL/EXEMPT FACTS AND FIGURES

SUPPORTING REPORT

West Mercia Police is the fourth largest geographic police force in England and Wales. Sparsely populated rural areas account for a large proportion of this geography.

Maintaining a healthy, visible police presence in isolated communities is challenging for policing teams. Response officers operate out of more centrally located stations and SNTs cover broader geographic areas.

The annual West Mercia confidence survey highlights the perception that residents in the more densely populated local policing areas of South Worcestershire (33%) and Telford & Wrekin (32%) see police officers or PCSOs at least once a week. This is significantly higher than results from the more sparsely populated areas of Herefordshire (21%) and Shropshire (22%). There is acknowledgement that this visibility can impact overall perceptions of local residents, in terms of their fear of crime, their confidence in their local policing team and in the wider force.

Every community needs to feel the benefit of an uplift in police officer numbers, with the force currently recruiting and training towards an enhanced establishment of 2,145 officers. The Chief Constable has committed to increasing police visibility, along with public confidence.

Mobile police stations are already well used within West Mercia Police as a means of enabling more direct engagement with communities, and are booked out on a daily basis. An uplift in these resources of two further vehicles (one each for the north and south of the force area) will enable further improvements in engaging with smaller, more isolated communities, particularly along the Welsh border.

These vehicles will enable local officers (particularly local SNTs covering remote areas) to go to small, rural communities and have a clear, visible presence on a more regular basis. Activity could include local surgeries, crime prevention advice, tie-ins with ongoing projects such as We Don't Buy Crime, and speed enforcement.

Anticipated benefits of this activity include increases to visibility and public confidence, reduced fear of crime, and the earlier identification of local issues, as well as faster resolutions.

FINANCIAL COMMENTS

This proposal sits outside the current Fleet Strategy.

The purchase and conversion costs of £50,000 are to be drawn down from reserves in 2019/20.

Costs regarding livery, are to be met from within the force's existing capital livery budget.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

By virtue of schedule 11, paragraph 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Police and Crime Commissioner may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of commissioner. That includes: entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not) and acquiring and disposing of property (including land).

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's website. Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request are not included in Part 1 but instead in the separate Part 2 report. There is no part 2 report.

OFFICER APPROVAL

Chief Executive Officer

Signature *Andy Cheafnes* Date 25th June 2019

